

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

A software security system is arranged to verify the authenticity of each element of a Java Virtual Machine installation. A digital signature is attached to each file of the JVM installation. A loader (20) verifies the digital signature of the JVM DLL (30). The JVM DLL 30 then verifies the digital signature of each other DLL and configuration file to be loaded (40, 50, 60, 70), and only loads those files which have successfully verified digital signatures. In this way the security of the JVM is enhanced, a user has greater confidence that the Java applications will function correctly, and the detection of incorrect or damaged JVM installations is improved.